



# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0905

September 5, 2013

BILL NELSON  
FLORIDA

Mr. Jeff Trandahl  
Executive Director and CEO  
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation  
1133 Fifteenth St., N.W., Suite 1100  
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Mr. Trandahl:

Congress established the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) in order to "further the conservation and management of fish, wildlife, and plant resources of the United States" (Pub. Law 98-244). Since then, we have entrusted NFWF with the continued stewardship and preservation of our nation's natural resources. Now, more than ever, NFWF's role is invaluable in righting the wrongs caused by the Deepwater Horizon disaster through the recently established Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund. The plea agreements from the criminal cases that resulted from the Deepwater Horizon disaster mandated that NFWF will administer the Gulf Environmental Fund for natural resources restoration. I look forward to your progress in the years to come.

According to the NFWF project selection criterion for the Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund, NFWF will prioritize projects that "remedy harm and eliminate or reduce the risk of future harm to Gulf Coast natural resources." I believe that creating a resilient gulf ecosystem is the best way to protect our natural habitats and livelihoods that depend on a healthy and vibrant Gulf Coast. It is important that NFWF supports projects that encourage healthy ecosystems from Florida's rivers and estuaries down to the Gulf Coast so that oysters, fisheries, and marine life can once again thrive. I strongly encourage you to prioritize ecosystem restoration focused project applications and allocate funding as soon as possible.

The State of Florida has many natural wonders from Perdido Key State Park to Chassahowitzka National Wildlife Refuge that are protected by federal and state law, but as you know, much of my state's natural beauty lies outside of such areas. The waters of the Gulf of Mexico, the oyster and shellfish populations of Florida's bays, and the marine mammals along our coastline are just a few examples of the sensitive habitats and species that are in need of immediate restoration funding and long-term resiliency planning.

I appreciate how transparent your process has been thus far, and I look forward to monitoring your progress in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Nelson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.